Draft

Environmental Assessment
Roger R. Fawcett Wildlife Management Area
Construction/Renovation Project
Palo Pinto County, Texas

Prepared by
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and
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INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze the environmental effects of establishing a new headquarters complex amidst existing old buildings on the newly acquired Roger R. Fawcett Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The WMA is located in Palo Pinto County between the cities of Fort Worth and Abilene, Texas, 65 miles west of Fort Worth and 85 miles east of Abilene. Because Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) proposes to use Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) funds to construct the headquarters complex, the proposed project constitutes a Federal action that is subject to evaluation by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the National Environmental Policy Act. This EA has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 C.F.R. 1500, et seq.), Department of Interior NEPA procedures.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Proposed operations on the Roger R. Fawcett WMA include management and conservation of habitat, providing a site for research and demonstration of habitat management, and providing public access to this newly acquired property in the Cross Timbers Ecological Region of Texas. To conduct these operations and provide oversight of the WMA, TPWD proposes to use WSFR funds to establish a new headquarters complex amidst existing old buildings on the WMA. A section of narrow roadway would also be constructed on the WMA to facilitate access to the headquarters complex. Though the roadway would be constructed using non-federal funds, it is discussed in this EA because it is directly related to the federal action.

The headquarters complex buildings and facilities are critical to the management, operations, and security of the WMA. The existing shop is too small and poorly constructed to provide for staff requirements. A new office constructed adjacent to the existing shop would provide a suitable facility for WMA staff to perform administrative duties and provide a central point for conducting computer operations, storing files and conducting meetings. The old residence is a 1960's vintage mobile home which is no longer serviceable and cannot be renovated. A new residence would provide full time occupancy of the WMA manager to oversee operations, site security and staff and visitor safety. The existing bunkhouse buildings were constructed in the 1970's by the former private landowner for the purpose of providing lodging for hunters. These buildings have had leaky roofs, poor plumbing, compromised structure, and antiquated electrical systems. These facilities are not serviceable or efficient, nor do they meet WMA operational requirements. The bunkhouses would be constructed to provide overnight lodging accommodations for visiting staff, students, researchers, and professional conservationists. The WMA is 30 miles from the nearest town with overnight accommodations.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A: Construction of a Headquarters Complex and Associated Entrance/Access Road (Preferred Alternative)

The location of the proposed project is shown in Appendix A and described in detail in the *Affected Environment* section below. The proposed construction project would entail:

- demolishing the old bunkhouse building;
- constructing a new larger bunkhouse building or buildings in the same location as the old bunkhouse. Design of the new bunkhouse facilities has not yet been finalized and the exact configuration of the building or buildings has not yet been determined. Currently TPWD plans to construct two new bunkhouse buildings that would be approximately 1,830 square feet and 3,870 square feet in size. The estimated impact area for construction of the bunkhouse facilities would be 0.75 acre to include a septic system and parking;
- demolishing the old mobile home residence and the ranch hand mobile home;
- constructing a new approximately 2,000 square foot residence in the same location as the old mobile home residence on up to 0.5 acre including parking and septic system;
- constructing a new 2,064 metal building to serve as an office adjacent to the existing shop. The office would be constructed on in a new footprint of up to 0.5 acre including parking and a septic system;
- upgrading water and sewer infrastructure to the new facilities including a new 144 square foot pump shed near FM 2692, and;
- using non-federal funds, constructing a section of new road from FM 2692 to connect to the existing entrance road.

Alternative B: No Action

If no action is taken the Roger R. Fawcett WMA manager would continue to work from his current office location at his home residence. Equipment would continue to be stored and maintained at dilapidated facilities on the WMA or at other WMAs and transported to the site on an as-needed basis. Lack of a suitable shop would result in staff having to work in existing dilapidated and unsafe structures. As such, management challenges associated with using ones home as an office, distance traveled from the home office to oversee the WMA, poor facilities to store and maintain equipment, and lack of safe facilities to conduct maintenance operations would continue to exist.

Other Alternatives Considered but Dismissed from Further Analysis

Alternatives to develop infrastructure on previously undisturbed locations were briefly discussed but quickly dropped from consideration. TPWD prefers to replace the existing infrastructure using the same footprints or nearby previously disturbed areas thereby minimizing new disturbance on the WMA.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The proposed headquarters complex is located on a ridge on the western side of Clayton Mountain just east of FM 2692 and south of Lake Palo Pinto (Appendix A). The elevation of the complex

ranges from approximately 1,020 to 1,154 feet, and the ridge is approximately 100 feet higher than the surrounding landscape. A topographic map of the headquarters complex site and proposed access road is provided in Appendix B.

Physical Resources

Air/Soils

The Clean Air Act, which was last amended in 1990, requires Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. The EPA has set NAAQS for six principal criteria pollutants: ground-level ozone, lead, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and particulate matter. No later than one year after promulgation of a new or revised NAAQS for any pollutant, the governor must submit designation recommendations to the EPA for all areas of the state. The EPA must then promulgate the designations within two years of promulgation of the revised NAAQS. Areas that do not meet (or contribute to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the NAAQS are designated nonattainment. Areas that meet the NAAQS are designated attainment; and areas that cannot be classified based on the available information, unclassifiable. As of September 22, 2016, Palo Pinto County is designated as in attainment/unclassifiable for all air quality criteria pollutants.

The soil at the sites of the residence, bunkhouse, and shop consists of Bonti-Exray complex with 0 to 8 percent slopes and is extremely stony. Soils along the road to the site consist of the same Bonti-Exray complex as well as the following soil types as shown in Appendix C:

- Owns-Harpersville complex, 8 to 45 percent slopes, extremely bouldery
- Minwells fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes
- Shaltruce gravelly sandy loam, 12 to 50 percent slopes, very rubbly
- Truce fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes

Water/Wetlands

No surface water resources occur on the proposed headquarters complex sites or the proposed route of the entrance/access road. As stated above, the headquarters sites are on the top of a ridge, and the closest water resource is an unnamed, ephemeral tributary to Palo Pinto Creek located downslope along the southern edge at the bottom of the ridge. Drainage on the north side of the ridge is impounded in Waddell Ranch Lake Number 1 as shown in Appendix D.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

The proposed site is located in the Cross Timbers Ecological Region of Texas as mapped in the Texas Conservation Action Plan. According to the Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas, the construction project sites are located mostly in the Post Oak Woodland vegetation system, though the shop/office is located in the Savanna Grassland system. The proposed entrance/access road and the existing road to which it would connect are located in the Savanna Grassland, Post oak

Woodland,: Mesquite Shrubland, Riparian Hardwood Forest, and Riparian Deciduous Shrubland systems. Ecological systems in the project area are shown in Appendix E, and descriptions of these systems are provided below:

Crosstimbers: Post Oak Woodland (Identifier: CES205.682.6 MoRAP Code: 504): This vegetation type represents the typical occurrence dominated by the usual *Quercus stellata* (post oak) and *Quercus marilandica* (blackjack oak), with other canopy species such as *Carya texana* (black hickory), *Ulmus crassifolia* (cedar elm), *Quercus fusiformis* (plateau live oak), *Juniperus virginiana* (eastern redcedar), and *Celtis laevigata* (sugar hackberry) present. The overstory may be relatively closed, resulting in reduced herbaceous cover. In some situations, *Prosopis glandulosa* (mesquite) may be relatively dense. Grass species, particularly *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem), are present in the understory, and may form prairie openings in the woodland.

Crosstimbers: Savanna Grassland (Identifier: CES205.682.9 MoRAP Code: 507): This is a primarily herbaceous vegetation type, representing the graminoid dominated component of the savanna as it occurs within this system. Occurrences tend to occur on tighter soils (such as on Clay Loam, Clayey Upland, Claypan Prairie, and Claypan Savanna ecoclasses), but are often dependent on appropriate land management (such as prescribed fire and/or brush control) that ensures reduced woody cover. Woody canopy represents less than 25% cover. Historically, little bluestem likely dominated these grasslands, but current composition may be largely determined by landuse history and grazing pressure. In the east, where precipitation is greater, tallgrass species such as *Andropogon gerardii* (big bluestem) and *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indiangrass) may be important components. In the drier west, shortgrass species such as *Bouteloua dactyloides* (buffalograss) become more conspicuous. Other graminoid species that may be present include little bluestem, *Nassella leucotricha* (Texas wintergrass), *Paspalum setaceum* (fringeleaf paspalum), *Sporobolus compositus* (tall dropseed), *Bouteloua curtipendula* (sideoats grama), *Bouteloua hirsute* (hairy grama), *Bouteloua rigidiseta* (Texas grama), *Bothriochloa laguroides* ssp. *torreyana* (silver bluestem), and *Aristida* spp. (threeawn). Non-native species such as *Cynodon dactylon* (bermudagrass), *Bromus arvensis* (Japanese brome), *Bromus tectorum* (cheatgrass), and *Bothriochloa ischaemum* var. *songarica* (King Ranch bluestem) are often significant components. It may be difficult to distinguish occurrences of this vegetation type from occurrences of Southeastern Great Plains Tallgrass Prairie (CES205.685) to the east and Central Mixedgrass Prairie (CES303.659) to the west. Mesquite is a common shrub in this type, and some areas have fairly dense mesquite cover.

Native Invasive: Mesquite Shrubland (MoRAP Code: 9106) *Prosopis glandulosa* (honey mesquite) is often the dominant species of this broadly-defined type, but species such as *Acacia farnesiana* (huisache), sugar hackberry, *Juniperus ashei* (Ashe juniper), cedar elm, *Ziziphus obtusifolia* (lotebush), *Mahonia trifoliolata* (agarito), *Ulmus alata* (winged elm), *Rhus* spp. (sumacs), *Condalia hookeri* (brasil), *Diospyros virginiana* (common persimmon), *Diospyros texana* (Texas persimmon), *Celtis ehrenbergiana* (granjeno), and *Opuntia engelmannii* var. *lindheimeri* (Lindheimer pricklypear) may also be important. Trees such as plateau live oak, *Quercus virginiana* (coastal live oak), or post oak may form a sparse canopy.

Central Texas: Riparian Hardwood Forest (Identifier CES205.709, MoRAP Code 1904)
Deciduous trees such as sugar hackberry, cedar elm, black willow, American sycamore, eastern cottonwood, post oak, white and green ash (east), and water oak (east) are common overstory components of this type. Live oak is often an important component.

Central Texas: Riparian Deciduous Shrubland (Identifier CES205.709, MoRAP Code 1906)
This mapped type is usually represented by successional shrublands or young forests dominated by small deciduous trees or shrubs such as black willow, cedar elm, winged elm (east), sugar hackberry, green ash (east), possumhaw, or mesquite (west), or by common buttonbush.

Federally Listed Species

In accordance with Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, federally funded, constructed, permitted, or licensed projects must take into consideration impacts to federally listed and proposed threatened or endangered species. According to the USWFS Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPAC) System, three listed endangered species have the potential to be present in the project area (Table xx.): the golden-cheeked warbler (*Setophaga chrysoparia*), the black-capped vireo (*Vireo atricapilla*) and the whooping crane (*Grus americana*). According to the IPAC Trust Resources Report (included in Appendix F), one candidate for listing, the Texas fawnsfoot (*Truncilla macrodon*), also has the potential to occur in the project area.

Table 1. Federally Listed Species Potentially in the Project Vicinity. Roger R. Fawcett Wildlife Management Area, Palo Pinto County TX.

Species	Listing Status	Critical Habitat
Golden-cheeked warbler (*Setophaga chrysoparia*)	Endangered	Not designated
Black-capped vireo (*Vireo atricapilla*)	Endangered	Not designated
Whooping crane (*Grus americana*)	Endangered	Designated, not in project area.
Texas fawnsfoot (*Truncilla macrodon*)	Candidate	NA

Golden-cheeked Warbler
The breeding range for the species encompasses central Texas from Dallas, Palo Pinto, and Bosque counties south through the eastern and south-central portions of the Edwards Plateau. During the nonbreeding season, the range includes highlands (1,500-2,500 meters) of from Chiapas (Mexico) through Guatemala, Honduras, and north-central Nicaragua. Transients occur from June to August and in March in Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas, and western Veracruz, Mexico.

Breeding habitat consists of old-growth and mature regrowth Ashe juniper-oak woodlands in limestone hills and canyons, at 180 to 520 meters elevation, including edges and open mosaics of Ashe juniper-scrub oak association in broken terrain in canyons and slopes, and closed

canopy stands with plenty of old junipers and a sufficient proportion of deciduous oaks in the canopy. Breeding habitat has diminished due to juniper eradication programs and continuing urbanization in central Texas.

Based on a Golden-cheeked Warbler Predictive Habitat Model (Diamond et al. 2007) suitable habitat for this species does occur on the WMA but does not occur on the project site, and on-the-ground evaluations confirm the absence of suitable golden-cheeked warbler habitat on the project sites. A map of the habitat model is included as Appendix F.

Black-capped Vireo

In Texas during summer breeding, this species occurs in dense low thickets and oak scrub, mostly on rocky hillsides or steep ravine slopes in rugged terrain. Nesting occurs in areas with clumps of woody vegetation separated by bare ground, rocks, and/or herbaceous vegetation, often in areas with sparse *Juniperus*. Favorable breeding habitat has 35-55% dispersed scrub cover (primarily deciduous) in spatially heterogeneous configurations, with juniper cover below 10% in most areas, although in the Edwards Plateau and to the southwest junipers may contribute important cover. The small breeding range is in south-central U.S. and adjacent northeastern Mexico with documented breeding populations in 49 Texas counties, 5 Oklahoma counties, and 3 Mexican states. The species occupies Texas breeding range March-September. Threats include cowbird brood parasitism, habitat loss, and habitat degradation resulting from fire suppression, housing development, road construction, over-browsing by domestic livestock, exotic ungulates and white-tailed deer, and range management practices that remove broad-leaved, low woody vegetation.

Though no reliable habitat model exists for black-capped vireo, on-the-ground evaluations indicate that suitable habitat for this species is present on the WMA but is not present in the proposed project area. Composition and structure of the vegetation community is not suitable for nesting black-capped vireos on the project site.

Whooping Crane

This long-lived species only occurs in North America and is North America's tallest bird approaching 5 feet while standing erect. The July 2010 wild population was estimated at 383 birds. This species occurs in the wild at 3 locations. The Aransas-Wood Buffalo National Park population is the only self-sustaining wild population which nests in Wood Buffalo National Park and adjacent areas in Canada and winters in coastal marshes in Texas at Aransas. Critical Habitat for this species is designated within their wintering grounds along the Texas coast about 350 miles southeast of Roger R. Fawcett WMA. This species migrates across most of Texas utilizing a variety of wetland and other habitats, including inland marshes, lakes, ponds, wet meadows, rivers, and agricultural fields. Stopovers during migration occur in shallow, seasonally and semi-permanently flooded palustrine wetlands and feeding occurs in wetlands and harvested grain fields for a diet of frogs, fish, crayfish, insects, and agricultural grains. Though suitable stopover habitat is vital to the successful migration of the whooping crane, no stopover habitat has been designated as Critical Habitat in Texas. No Critical Habitat for this species has been designated within 300 miles of the Roger R. Fawcett WMA.

This species has not been observed within the project area or on the WMA, though the WMA

is located near the center of the corridor within which 95% of sightings of the whooping crane have been documented during migration. Because no small lakes, stock tanks/ponds, and other shallow wetland habitat are located within the headquarters construction sites, no suitable stopover habitat is located in the project area for the headquarters complex. Small stock ponds that may provide suitable migratory stopover habitat are located in close proximity to the proposed entrance/access road route but would not be impacted by the proposed project.

Texas Fawnsfoot

Little is known about the preferred habitat of most freshwater mussels in Texas. The Texas fawnsfoot seems to prefer rivers and larger streams and be intolerant of impoundment. It has been documented in flowing rice irrigation canals, and possibly in sand, gravel, and sandy-mud bottoms in moderate flows.

No surface water resources are located in the project area. No perennial or flowing (un-impounded) water occurs in the area adjacent to the project, therefore no suitable habitat for the Texas fawnsfoot is present in or near the project.

State Listed Species

The TPWD County List of Rare Species for Palo Pinto County is provided in Appendix H. Based on that list, the following state-listed threatened species (excluding those that are also federally listed) have the potential to occur in Palo Pinto County:

- American Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*)
- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
- Brazos water snake (*Nerodia harteri*)
- Texas horned lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*)

The American Peregrine Falcon migrates across the state using a wide range of habitats during migration. This species could occur in the project area during migration.

The Bald Eagle is found primarily near rivers and large lakes where it nests in tall trees or on cliffs. Anecdotal reports indicate this species may winter near Lake Palo Pinto, however suitable nesting habitat is not present on the project sites. Suitable wintering habitat may be present in the project area.

The Brazos water snake is found in shallow riffles and on rocky portions of river and stream banks. This species prefers flowing water which is not found in the project area, therefore Brazos water snake habitat is not present on the site.

The Texas horned lizard can be found in open, arid and semi-arid regions with sparse vegetation, including grass, cactus, scattered brush or scrubby trees. Suitable habitat may be present for the Texas horned lizard at the proposed headquarters complex site.

Historic and Cultural Resources

The geology of road and water project area, as well as the majority of the Fawcett WMA, is mapped as the Brazos River Formation Expanded of the Pennsylvanian period Des Moines Series (USGS 2016), which formed roughly 300 million years ago. In southern Palo Pinto County, this formation consists of sandstone, conglomerate, and mudstone, fine to medium grained, calcareous with some marine megafossils, and grading into thin beds of sandstone and shale (USGS 2016). This is not a chert-bearing formation

Three main soil types are present in the project area. Most of the proposed new road runs across soils mapped as Truce fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes. This is a shallow fine sandy loam formed on the footslope of ridges from loamy colluvium and/or slope alluvium over clayey residuum weathered from claystone and/or sandstone over sandstone. The typical profile is fine sandy loam from 0 to 5 inches, followed by two layers of clay from 5 to 56 inches, and 56 to 80 inches (NRCS 2016).

Most of the structures that will be linked to the new water system are mapped within the Bonti-Exray complex, 1 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony. This association is formed on the summit and shoulders of ridgetops from loamy and/or clayey residuum weathered from claystone and/or sandstone; surface gravels range from 10 to 14 percent. The typical profile consists of 3 to 4 inches of fine to very fine sandy loam, a second layer of fine sandy loam from 3 or 4 to inches, clay from 8 to between 16 and 30 inches depending on summit versus shoulder, overlying bedrock (NRCS 2016).

The area between the proposed new road and the existing structures consists of the sideslope of the ridge, and is mapped as Owens-Harpersville Complex, 8 to 45 percent slope, extremely bouldery. This soil complex forms the side slope and backslope of ridges from clayey residuum eroded from claystone; surface rocks are at 13 percent. The typical profile consists of a shallow 6 or 7-inch-thick clay layer above either a clay layer from 7 to 80 inches, or a clay layer from 6 to 19 inches overlying a silty clay layer from 19 to 80 inches (NRCS 2016); the soils are calcareous.

Based on a review of the soils and geology, the project area has a low probability for prehistoric cultural resources, and a very low probability for buried cultural resources. The presence of ranch structures within the project area suggests a moderate potential for historic-aged cultural resources.

File Search Results:

The Texas Sites Atlas database and records maintained by TPWD indicate that no previous archaeological survey has been conducted within any part of the Fawcett WMA, and there are no previously recorded archaeological sites within the WMA.

There was a 1984 intensive pedestrian survey by Espey, Huston, and Associates Inc. (subsequently PBSJ Corporation and now Atkins) for an overhead powerline for the Brazos Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., The survey located sites adjacent to the project area, including one along Palo Pinto Creek floodplain.

A 2010 survey by Geo-Marine, Inc. for the proposed Turkey Peak Reservoir Project also located cultural resources along Palo Pinto Creek, east-northeast of the WMA boundaries

TPWD will conduct intensive pedestrian surveys according to the Texas Historical Commission minimum survey standards and complete required coordination prior to any projects that involve ground disturbance. All project components (federally funded and state funded activities) will be included in this survey.

Recreation

The WMA is not yet operational, so there is currently no public access; the Roger R. Fawcett WMA has the potential to provide public access for hunting and other wildlife oriented recreation. Construction of the headquarters complex will help ensure safety and security of the site as well as facilitate management that benefits recreation.

Social and Economic Factors

The proposed headquarters complex site is located in a remote location with low human population densities. It is located approximately 4.5 miles west of Santo, with an estimated population of 3,200 people. The proposed project area is approximately 5 miles east of Gordon with an estimated population of 470 people. Lands in the area are primarily used for farming, ranching, and oil and gas development.

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Population; February 11, 1994) was designed to focus the attention of federal agencies on the human health and environmental conditions of minority and low-income communities. It requires federal agencies to adopt strategies to address environmental justice concerns within the context of agency operations and proposed actions. In an accompanying memorandum, President Clinton emphasized that existing laws, such as NEPA, should provide an opportunity for federal agencies to assess the environmental hazards and socioeconomic impacts associated with any given agency action upon minority and low income communities. In April of 1995, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) released a guidance document titled Environmental Justice Strategy: Executive Order 12898. This document defines the approaches by which the USEPA would ensure that disproportionately high environmental and/or socioeconomic effects on minority and low income communities are identified and addressed. Further, it establishes agency-wide goals for all Native Americans with regard to environmental justice issues and concerns.

The proposed project is located on State land, which is not a low-income or minority community. According to available population data for the zip codes surrounding the WMA (76453, 76462, and 76472) the income of 8.7 percent of residents in the area is below the poverty level.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Alternative A (Preferred Alternative)

Under the preferred alternative the headquarters complex would be constructed and the management challenges associated with unsafe structures in poor condition would be eliminated.

Physical Resources

Air/Soils

A temporary impact on air quality in the construction area could result if the soil becomes dry and equipment creates dust. After construction is complete, there would be no impact to air quality from the presence of TPWD personnel at the headquarters complex other than emissions from a small number of vehicles and equipment.

Water/Wetlands

No water resources occur on the proposed headquarters complex site. Neither the unnamed tributary to Palo Pinto Creek located south of the project nor Waddell Lake Number 1 located north of the project would be adversely impacted by the headquarters construction projects or the access road. Water quality would be protected during and after construction using a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and associated best management practices. The current water supply and septic systems associated with each of the buildings is inadequate and will be redesigned. Improvements to the existing dilapidated plumbing systems within and adjacent to the structures would increase water quality in the general area.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

Vegetation removal will be minimized at each site. Few trees consisting of post oak (*Quercus stellata)* and blackjack oak (*Q. marilandica*) would need to be removed to fit the new residences and septic systems in place. Due to the abundance of woody plants surrounding these sites, revegetation of woody species is not proposed. Native grasses would be seeded around the building to help the recovery of disturbed soils. Construction of the headquarters complex would not impact the value or integrity of the vegetation community in the project area.

Federally Listed Species

<u>Golden-cheeked warbler and Black-capped vireo</u>

Suitable breeding and nesting habitats for the golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo are not found in the project area. The project area is post oak woodland and does not meet the breeding habitat requirements for these species. As stated above the Predictive Habitat Model for golden-cheeked warbler, there is potential habitat present on the adjacent WMA property outside of the project area. The birds could pass through the project area, therefore, the possibility does exist that minimal disturbance from noise related to construction activities may occur during warbler or

vireo breeding season. This possible disturbance is not anticipated to be severe enough nor of lengthy duration to where territory establishment and/or reproductive success would be negatively affected in the adjacent habitat on the WMA. Therefore, noise and disturbance from the temporary construction would have an insignificant effect on these bird species. No activity is planned that would alter habitat on the WMA. The Service has determined that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the black-capped vireo and the golden-cheeked warbler.

Whooping crane

The project is located within the corridor in which 95 percent of whooping crane sightings occur during migration; however, whooping cranes have not been observed at the project site or the WMA and designated Critical Habitat is more than 300 miles away along the Texas coast. Small ponds that could provide suitable migratory stopover habitat for the whooping crane are found adjacent to the proposed entrance/access road. These features would not be impacted by the proposed project. If cranes chose to stop in the general area, they would more likely use nearby Lake Palo Pinto. However, if a whooping crane is seen using migratory stopover habitat in the project area during construction of the access road, work will stop and the USFWS Arlington Ecological Services Field Office will be contacted for further instructions. Because of the lack of suitable habitat, no observations of whooping cranes at the project site or WMA, and planned measures to cease construction in the event of a whooping crane being present, a determination of may affect, not likely to adversely affect was made.

Texas fawnsfoot

As stated above, no surface water resources are located in the project area. No perennial or flowing (un-impounded) water occurs in the area adjacent to the project; therefore no suitable habitat for the Texas fawnsfoot is present in or near the project. Due to lack of habitat, the proposed project will have no effect on this species.

A summary of the effect determinations for federally listed species is presented below in Table 2.

Table 2. Effect Determinations on Listed Species in the Project Vicinity

Species	Effect Determination	Critical Habitat Determination
Golden-cheeked warbler (*Setophaga chrysoparia*)	May affect, not likely to adversely affect	N/A
Black-capped vireo (*Vireo atricapilla*)	May affect, not likely to adversely affect	N/A
Whooping crane (*Grus americana*)	May affect, not likely to adversely affect	Not found in project area. No Effect
Texas fawnsfoot (*Truncilla macrodon*)	No effect	N/A

State Listed Species

Migratory or wintering state-listed species including the American peregrine falcon and bald eagle would not be adversely impacted by construction of the proposed headquarters complex due to the abundance of additional stopover and wintering habitat nearby that would not be impacted. These

species would most likely choose to use the habitat adjacent to Lake Palo Pinto, which is more than one mile from the construction project.

Because no suitable habitat for the Brazos water snake is found in the project area the proposed project would not adversely impact this species.

Texas horned lizards are generally active in this part of Texas from mid-April through September. At that time of year, they may be able to avoid slow (less than 15 miles per hour) moving equipment. The remainder of the year, this species hibernates only a few inches underground and they will be much more susceptible to earth moving equipment and compaction. If Texas horned lizards are encountered during construction they will be allowed to safely leave the site or will be relocated by a permitted individual to a nearby area with similar habitat that would not be disturbed during construction.

Other Wildlife Species

The construction of the headquarters complex may temporarily disturb and displace wildlife species if they are in the vicinity of the project area when construction is taking place. After construction is complete, wildlife that avoided the area are expected to return.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Section 106 coordination has not yet been completed, but as stated above, intensive pedestrian surveys and all required coordination would be completed prior to ground disturbance. In addition, if any archeological remains are discovered during construction, all ground disturbing work will cease until the archeologist can delineate the nature of the discovery and assess the site boundaries.

Recreation

The construction of the headquarters complex would enhance recreation by providing the opportunity for better public access and increased oversight of the WMA.

Social and Economic Factors

With the proposed project, social and economic benefits will result from increased public access and recreational opportunities after the facilities are constructed. The possible increase in recreational opportunities could result in increased use of the WMA, and associated benefits to the State, county, and local communities. Benefits would be in the form of increased recreation related spending and tax revenue.

<u>Environmental Justice</u>

No minority or low-income populations have been identified that would be adversely impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of E.O. 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23, no further analysis is required.

Alternative B: (No Action)

If the No Action alternative is implemented, there would be no construction of the headquarters complex for the Roger R. Fawcett WMA. The management challenges associated with unsafe structures in poor condition would continue to exist.

Physical Resources

Air/Soils

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no dust created by the construction of the facilities.

Water/Wetlands

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no impact to water resources at the proposed construction site.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no impact to the existing vegetation at the proposed construction site.

Federally Listed Species

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no impact to federally-listed species from construction of the facilities.

State Listed Species

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no impact to state-listed species from construction of the facilities.

Other Wildlife Species

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no impact to wildlife from construction of the facilities.

Historic and Cultural Resources

If the headquarters complex is not built, there would be no impact to historic and cultural resources from construction of the facilities.

Recreation

If construction of the headquarters complex does not occur, recreational opportunities would not be enhanced.

Social and Economic Factors

Anticipated public access and recreational benefits would not occur.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources of the Proposed Action

The implementation of this project would result in the commitment of resources such as fossil fuels and labor. In addition, federal funds would be expended for the implementation of the proposed project.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are the consequences that may result from the effects of the proposed action when added to other past, present, and potential future actions. Consequences of future actions must be considered to reasonable based on current information.

Managing and enhancing the native wildlife and vegetation communities within the Roger R. Fawcett WMA are critical WMA functions. Having a headquarters complex and entrance/access road would allow TPWD staff to effectively and efficiently manage the wildlife and habitat resources of the WMA. Overall, the cumulative impacts from the construction of the headquarters complex would be positive.

PUBLIC REVIEW

In March 2015 TPWD published a notice in the Texas Register notifying readers that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission would be considering acquisition of this property for the establishment of a new WMA and offering the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed transaction before the Commission takes action. At that meeting, staff recommended that the Commission authorize TPWD's Executive Director to take all necessary steps to acquire the Roger R Fawcett WMA and create a new WMA. The Commission granted that authorization. A copy of the Texas Register notice and the agenda for the March 2015 commission meeting are attached as Appendix I and Appendix J respectively. A transcript of the commission meeting can be found at
http://tpwd.texas.gov/business/feedback/meetings/2015/0326/transcripts/commission/index.phtml.
This Draft EA will be posted for a 30 day comment period to obtain public input regarding this specific project.

PREPARERS

- Julie Wicker, Program Leader, Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program, TPWD
- Devin Erxleben, Project Leader, Cross Timbers and Prairies Ecosystem Management Project TPWD
- Dennis Gissell, WMA Facilities Coordinator, TPWD
- John Lowe, Cultural Resource Specialist, TPWD

REFERENCES

City-Data.com http://www.city-data.com/city/Gordon-Texas.html and http://www.city-data.com/city/Palo-Pinto-Santo-Texas.html. Accessed December 9, 2016. Mineral Wells, Texas Poverty Rate Data. http://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Mineral-Wells-Texas.html. Accessed January 20, 2017

Elliott, L.F., D.D. Diamond, C.D. True, C.F. Blodgett, D. Pursell, D. German, and A. TreuerKuehn. 2014. Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas. Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Austin, Texas

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Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Division, Diversity and Habitat Assessment Programs. TPWD County Lists of Protected Species and Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Palo Pinto County. http://tpwd.texas.gov/gis/rtest/ Accessed March 25, 2016

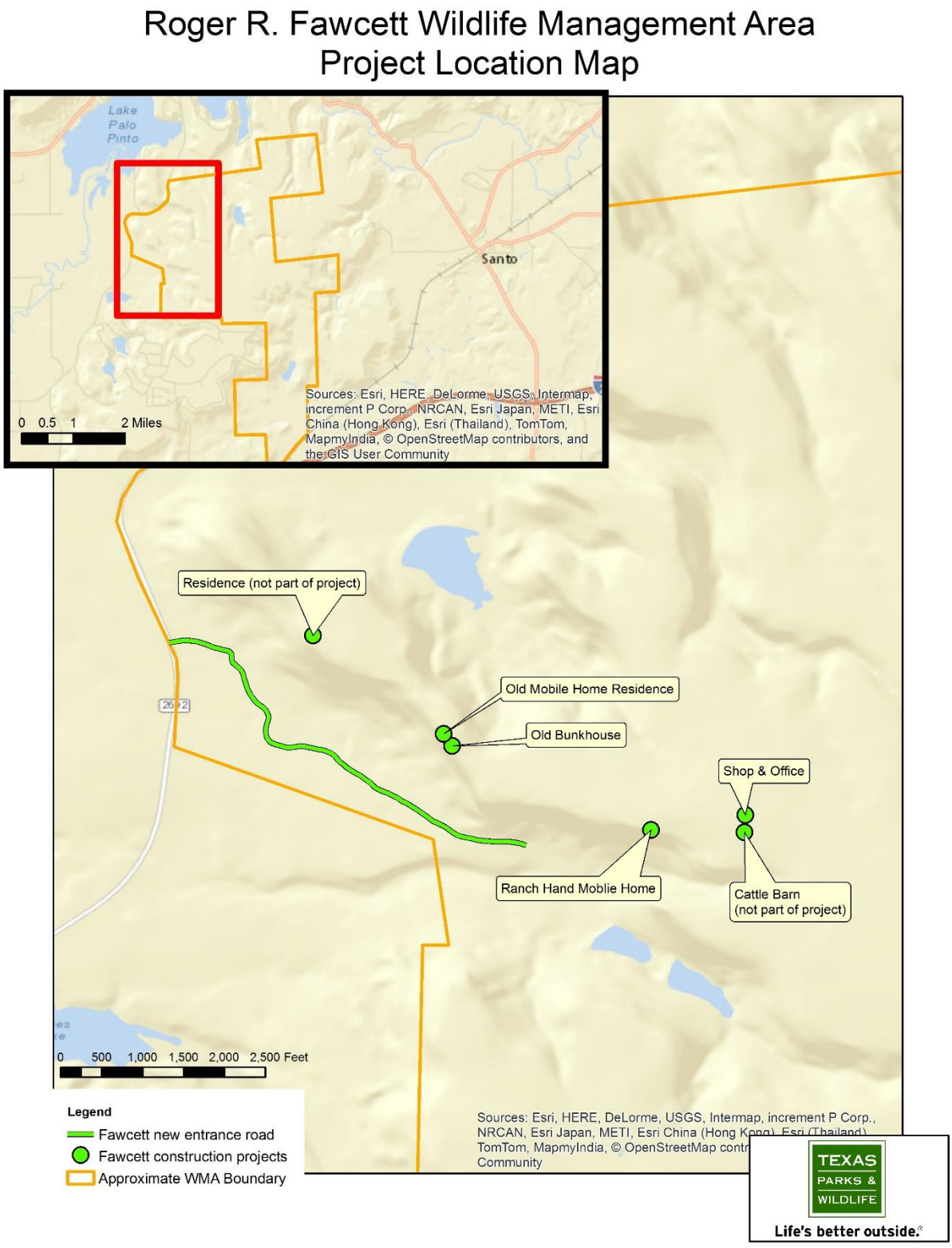
Texas Register Docket number 201500761

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Web Soil Survey. http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/ (Accessed September 26, 2016 and December 9, 2016)

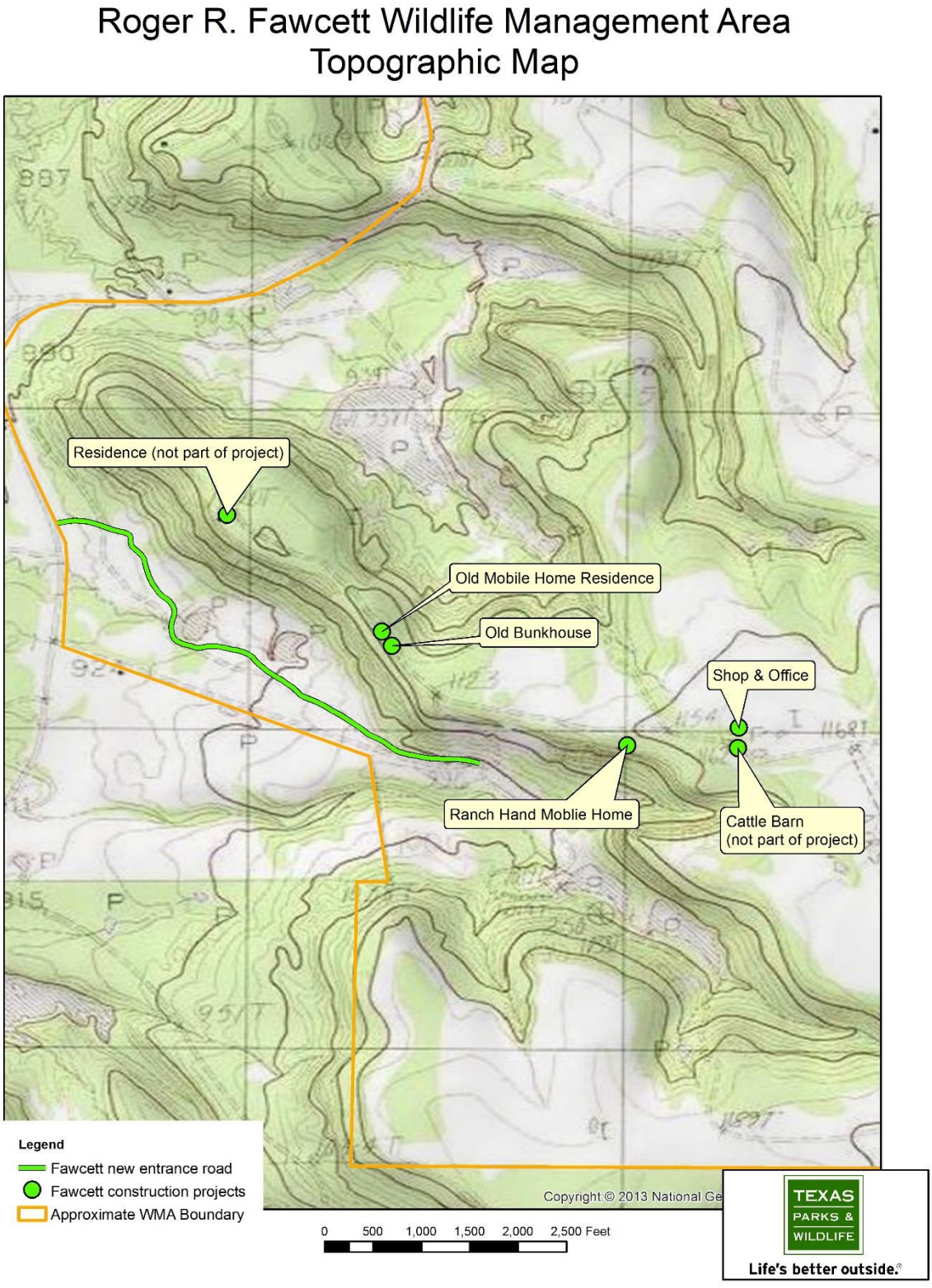
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information, Planning, and Conservation System. http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/ (Accessed: March 25, 2016).

United States Geological Survey , *Texas Geology Web Map Viewer*. Electronic document, http://tx.usgs.gov/texasgeology/, (accessed December 9, 2016.)

Appendix A: Project Location Map

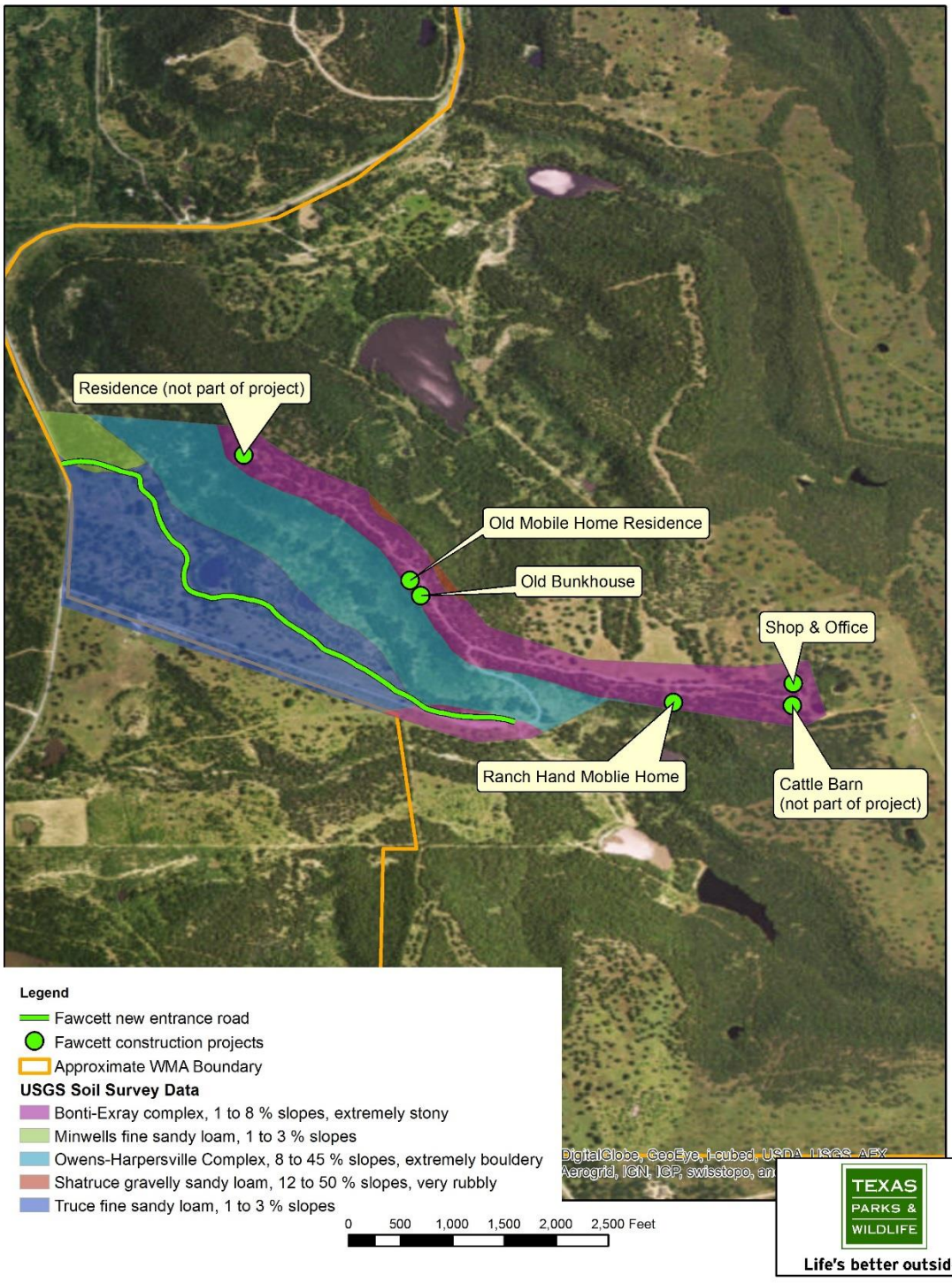


Appendix B: Topographic Map

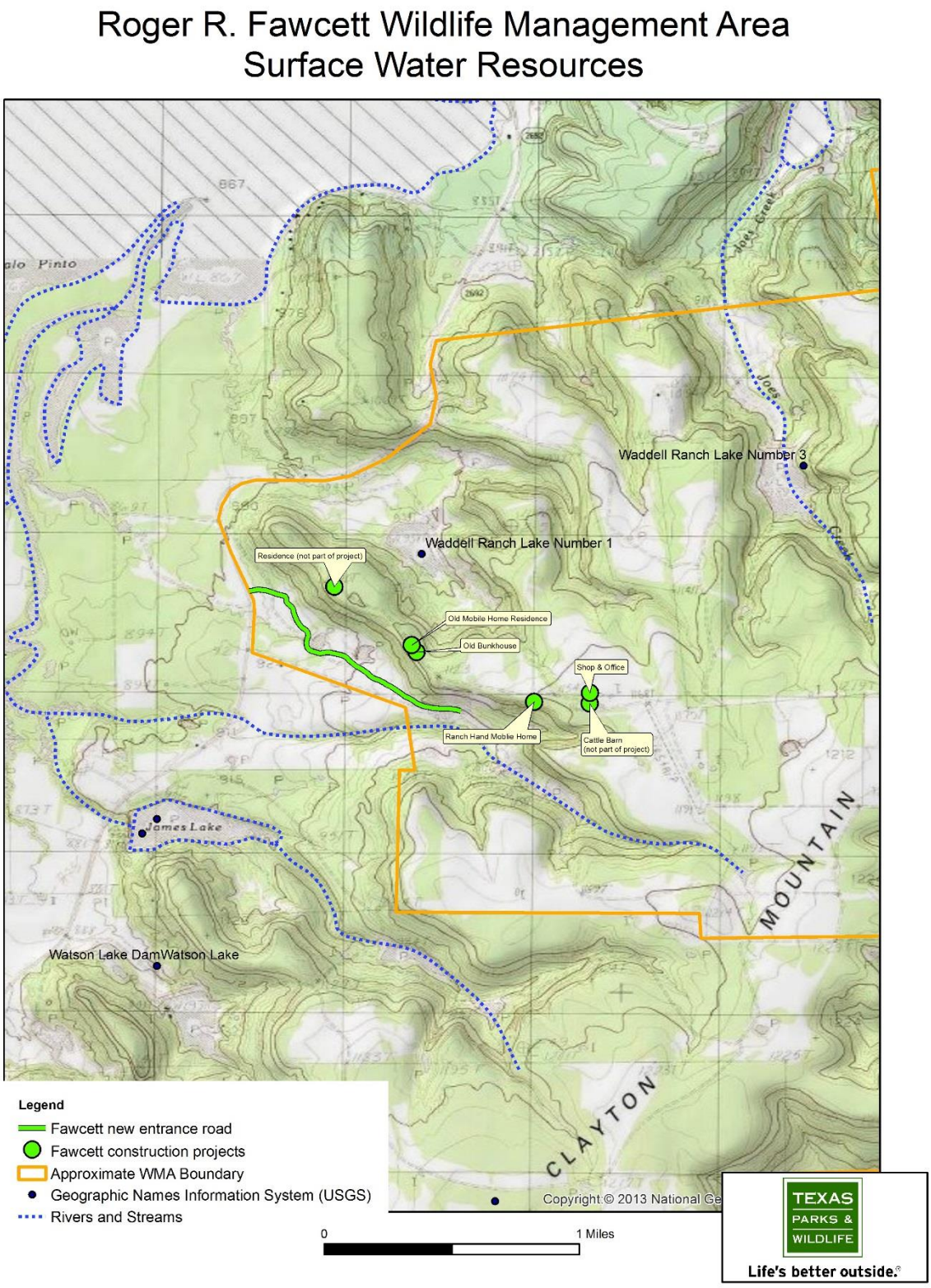


Appendix C: Soils Map

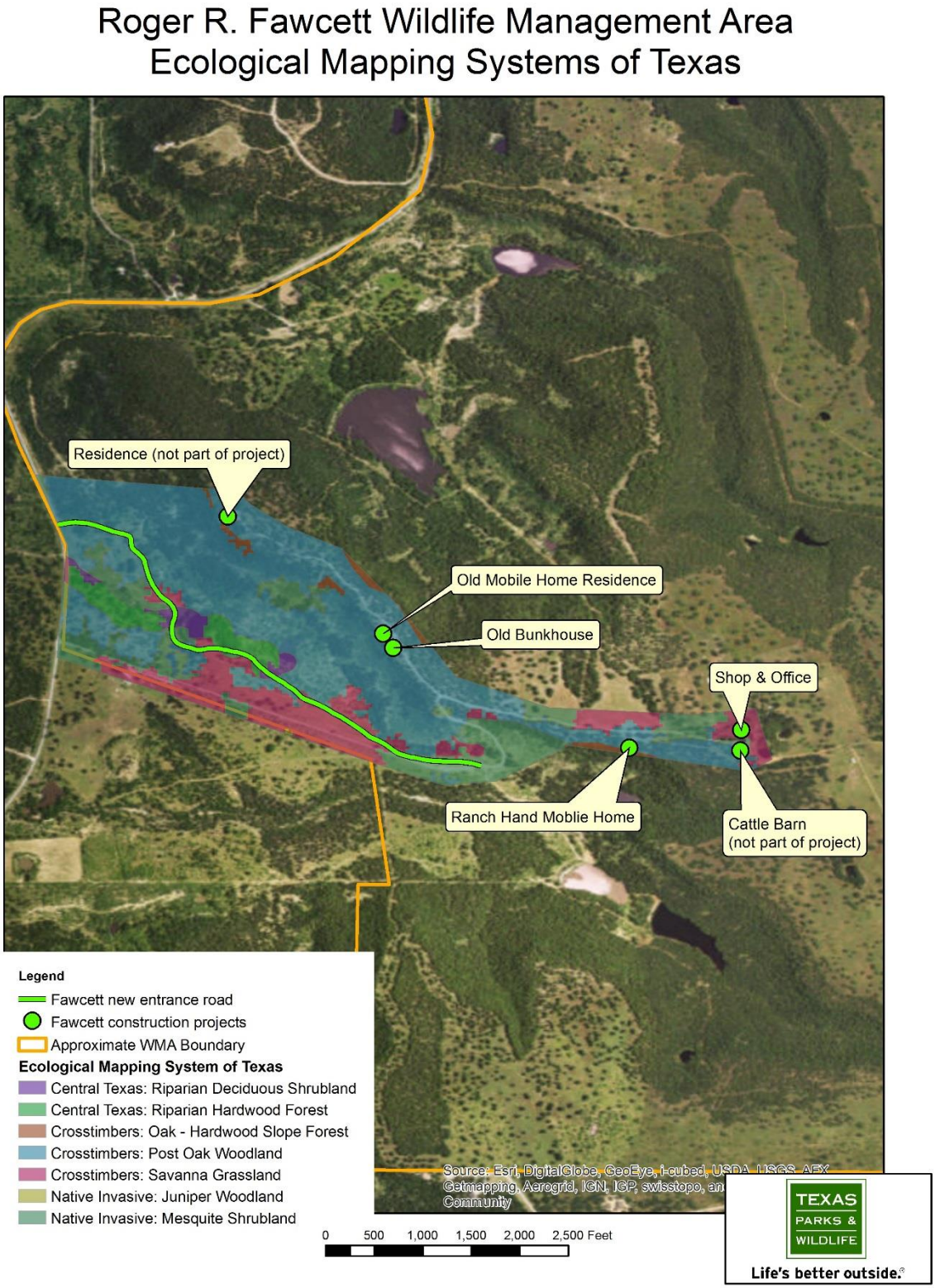
Roger R. Fawcett Wildlife Management Area
Soils



Appendix D: Water Resources Map



Appendix E: Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas



Appendix F: IPAC Trust Resources List

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fawcett WMA Construction Project

IPaC Trust Resources Report

Generated March 25, 2016 03:29 PM MDT, IPaC v3.0.0

This report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts. For project reviews that require U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service review or concurrence, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents page.

IPaC - Information for Planning and Conservation (https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/): A project planning tool to help streamline the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service environmental review process.

Table of Contents

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

IPaC Trust Resources Report

NAME

Fawcett WMA Construction Project

LOCATION

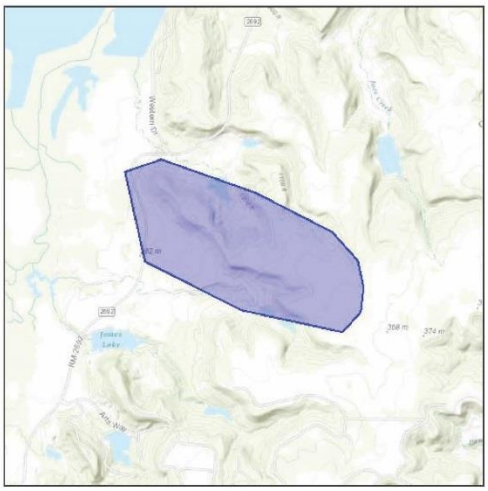
Palo Pinto County, Texas

DESCRIPTION

construction of headquarters complex in previously disturbed areas

IPAC LINK

https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/project/ES2YI-AN67R-CX7GN-C4XGP-7YDUAY



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Contact Information

Trust resources in this location are managed by:

Arlington Ecological Services Field Office
2005 Ne Green Oaks Blvd
Suite 140
Arlington, TX 76006-6247
(817) 277-1100

Endangered Species

Proposed, candidate, threatened, and endangered species are managed by the Endangered Species Program of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

This USFWS trust resource report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents section.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act **requires** Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency.

A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can only be obtained by requesting an official species list either from the Regulatory Documents section in IPaC or from the local field office directly.

The list of species below are those that may occur or could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

Birds

Black-capped Vireo Vireo atricapilla — Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B07T

Golden-cheeked Warbler (=wood) Dendroica chrysoparia — Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B07W

Least Tern Sterna antillarum — Endangered

THIS SPECIES ONLY NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED IF THE FOLLOWING CONDITION APPLIES
Wind Energy Projects

CRITICAL HABITAT
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B07N

Piping Plover Charadrius melodus — Threatened

THIS SPECIES ONLY NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED IF THE FOLLOWING CONDITION APPLIES
Wind Energy Projects

CRITICAL HABITAT
There is **final** critical habitat designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B079

Red Knot Calidris canutus rufa — Threatened

THIS SPECIES ONLY NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED IF THE FOLLOWING CONDITION APPLIES
Wind Energy Projects

CRITICAL HABITAT
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0DM

Whooping Crane Grus americana — Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT
There is **final** critical habitat designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B003

Clams

Texas Fawnsfoot Truncilla macrodon — Candidate

CRITICAL HABITAT
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=F04E

Critical Habitats

There are no critical habitats in this location

Migratory Birds

Birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Any activity that results in the take of migratory birds or eagles is prohibited unless authorized by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.[1] There are no provisions for allowing the take of migratory birds that are unintentionally killed or injured.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in the take of migratory birds is responsible for complying with the appropriate regulations and implementing appropriate conservation measures.

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1. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern
  http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php
- Conservation measures for birds
  http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measures.php
- Year-round bird occurrence data
  http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/akn-histogram-tools.php

The following species of migratory birds could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

Bald Eagle Haliaeetus leucocephalus — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B008

Bell's Vireo Vireo bellii — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JX

Burrowing Owl Athene cunicularia — Bird of conservation concern
Year-round
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0NC

Chestnut-collared Longspur Calcarius ornatus — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering

Dickcissel Spiza americana — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Fox Sparrow Passerella iliaca — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering

Golden Eagle Aquila chrysaetos — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0DV

Harris's Sparrow Zonotrichia querula — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering

Hudsonian Godwit Limosa haemastica — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Migrating

Lark Bunting Calamospiza melanocorys — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering

Le Conte's Sparrow Ammodramus leconteii — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering

Little Blue Heron Egretta caerulea — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Loggerhead Shrike Lanius ludovicianus — Bird of conservation concern
Year-round
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FY

Mccown's Longspur Calcarius mccownii — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HB

Mississippi Kite Ictinia mississippiensis — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Orchard Oriole Icterus spurius — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Painted Bunting Passerina ciris — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Prothonotary Warbler Protonotaria citrea — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Red-headed Woodpecker Melanerpes erythrocephalus — Bird of conservation concern
Year-round

Rufous-crowned Sparrow Aimophila ruficeps — Bird of conservation concern
Year-round
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0MX

Rusty Blackbird Euphagus carolinus — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher Tyrannus forficatus — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding

Short-eared Owl Asio flammeus — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HD

Sprague's Pipit Anthus spragueii — Bird of conservation concern
Season: Wintering
https://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0GD

Wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries

There are no refuges or fish hatcheries in this location

Wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory

Impacts to NWI wetlands and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District.

DATA LIMITATIONS

The Service's objective of mapping wetlands and deepwater habitats is to produce reconnaissance level information on the location, type and size of these resources. The maps are prepared from the analysis of high altitude imagery. Wetlands are identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology and geography. A margin of error is inherent in the use of imagery; thus, detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis.

The accuracy of image interpretation depends on the quality of the imagery, the experience of the image analysts, the amount and quality of the collateral data and the amount of ground truth verification work conducted. Metadata should be consulted to determine the date of the source imagery used and any mapping problems.

Wetlands or other mapped features may have changed since the date of the imagery or field work. There may be occasional differences in polygon boundaries or classifications between the information depicted on the map and the actual conditions on site.

DATA EXCLUSIONS

Certain wetland habitats are excluded from the National mapping program because of the limitations of aerial imagery as the primary data source used to detect wetlands. These habitats include seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation that are found in the intertidal and subtidal zones of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters. Some deepwater reef communities (coral or tuberficid worm reefs) have also been excluded from the inventory. These habitats, because of their depth, go undetected by aerial imagery.

DATA PRECAUTIONS

Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate federal, state, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

This location overlaps all or part of the following wetlands:

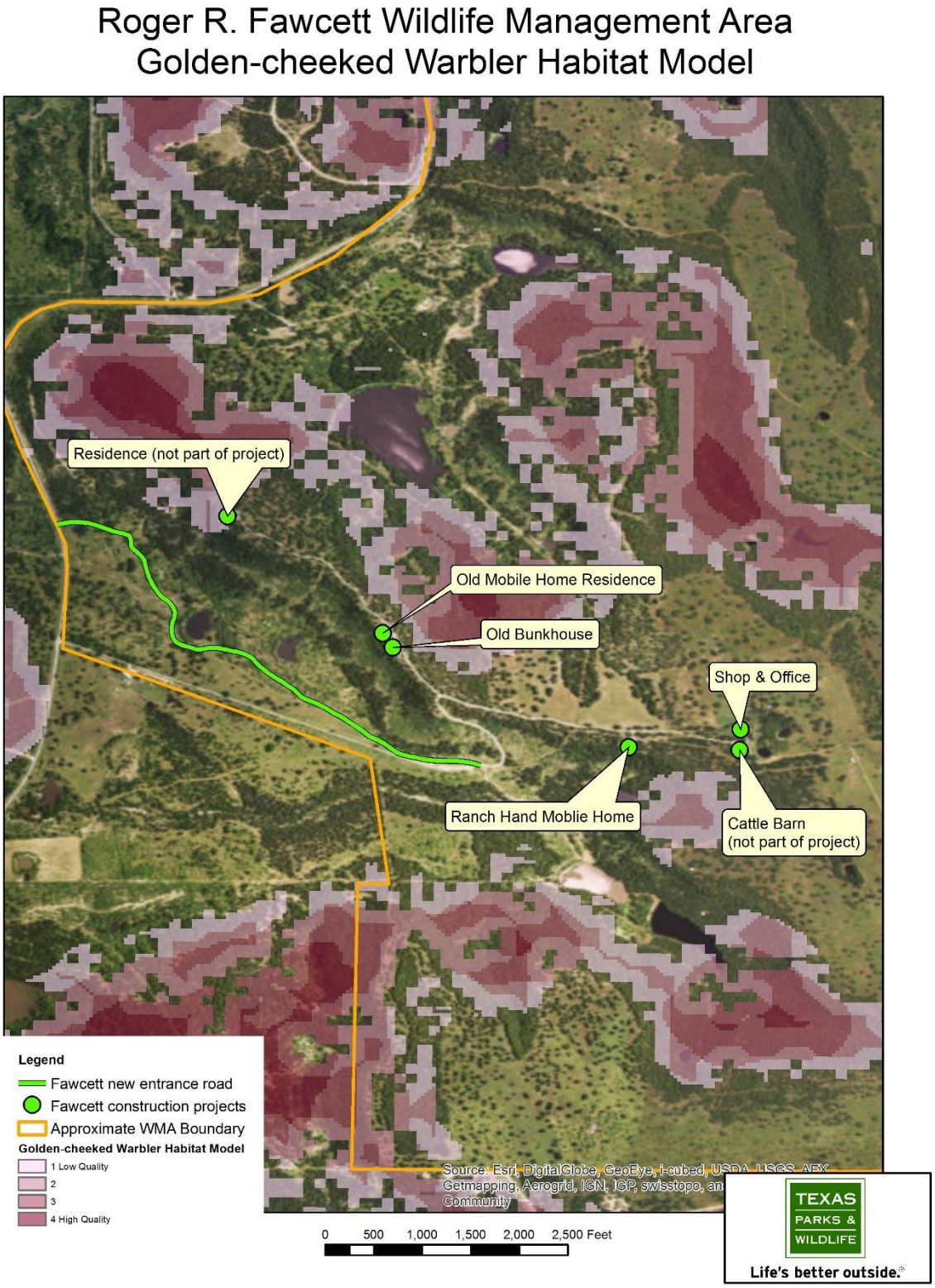
Freshwater Pond

PUBHh	19.0 acres
PUSCx	0.523 acre
PUBFh	0.206 acre
PUSCh	0.122 acre

A full description for each wetland code can be found at the National Wetlands

Inventory website: http://107.20.228.18/decoders/wetlands.aspx

Appendix G: Golden-cheeked Warbler Habitat Model



Appendix H: TPWD Palo Pinto County List

Last Revision: 1/6/2016 11:11:00 AM

PALO PINTO COUNTY

BIRDS

		Federal Status	State Status
American Peregrine Falcon	*Falco peregrinus anatum*	DL	T

year-round resident and local breeder in west Texas, nests in tall cliff eyries; also, migrant across state from more northern breeding areas in US and Canada, winters along coast and farther south; occupies wide range of habitats during migration, including urban, concentrations along coast and barrier islands; low-altitude migrant, stopovers at leading landscape edges such as lake shores, coastlines, and barrier islands.

Arctic Peregrine Falcon	*Falco peregrinus tundrius*	DL	

migrant throughout state from subspecies' far northern breeding range, winters along coast and farther south; occupies wide range of habitats during migration, including urban, concentrations along coast and barrier islands; low-altitude migrant, stopovers at leading landscape edges such as lake shores, coastlines, and barrier islands.

Bald Eagle	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	DL	T

found primarily near rivers and large lakes; nests in tall trees or on cliffs near water; communally roosts, especially in winter; hunts live prey, scavenges, and pirates food from other birds

Black-capped Vireo	*Vireo atricapilla*	LE	E

oak-juniper woodlands with distinctive patchy, two-layered aspect; shrub and tree layer with open, grassy spaces; requires foliage reaching to ground level for nesting cover; return to same territory, or one nearby, year after year; deciduous and broad-leaved shrubs and trees provide insects for feeding; species composition less important than presence of adequate broad-leaved shrubs, foliage to ground level, and required structure; nesting season March-late summer

Golden-cheeked Warbler	*Setophaga chrysoparia*	LE	E

juniper-oak woodlands; dependent on Ashe juniper (also known as cedar) for long fine bark strips, only available from mature trees, used in nest construction; nests are placed in various trees other than Ashe juniper; only a few mature junipers or nearby cedar brakes can provide the necessary nest material; forage for insects in broad-leaved trees and shrubs; nesting late March-early summer

Interior Least Tern	*Sterna antillarum athalassos*	LE	E

subspecies is listed only when inland (more than 50 miles from a coastline); nests along sand and gravel bars within braided streams, rivers; also know to nest on man-made structures (inland beaches, wastewater treatment plants, gravel mines, etc); eats small fish and crustaceans, when breeding forages within a few hundred feet of colony

Mountain Plover	*Charadrius montanus*		

breeding: nests on high plains or shortgrass prairie, on ground in shallow depression; nonbreeding: shortgrass plains and bare, dirt (plowed) fields; primarily insectivorous

Peregrine Falcon	*Falco peregrinus*	DL	T

both subspecies migrate across the state from more northern breeding areas in US and Canada to winter along coast and farther south; subspecies (F. p. anatum) is also a resident breeder in west Texas; the two subspecies' listing statuses differ, F.p. tundrius is no longer listed in Texas; but because the subspecies are not easily distinguishable at a distance, reference is generally made only to the species level; see subspecies for habitat.

PALO PINTO COUNTY

BIRDS		Federal Status	State Status
Sprague's Pipit	*Anthus spragueii*	C	

only in Texas during migration and winter, mid September to early April; short to medium distance, diurnal migrant; strongly tied to native upland prairie, can be locally common in coastal grasslands, uncommon to rare further west; sensitive to patch size and avoids edges.

Western Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia hypugaea*

open grasslands, especially prairie, plains, and savanna, sometimes in open areas such as vacant lots near human habitation or airports; nests and roosts in abandoned burrows

Whooping Crane	*Grus americana*	LE	E

potential migrant via plains throughout most of state to coast; winters in coastal marshes of Aransas, Calhoun, and Refugio counties

FISHES		Federal Status	State Status
Guadalupe bass	*Micropterus treculii*		

endemic to perennial streams of the Edward's Plateau region; introduced in Nueces River system

Sharpnose shiner	*Notropis oxyrhynchus*	LE	

endemic to Brazos River drainage; also, apparently introduced into adjacent Colorado River drainage; large turbid river, with bottom a combination of sand, gravel, and clay-mud

Smalleye shiner	*Notropis buccula*	LE	

endemic to upper Brazos River system and its tributaries (Clear Fork and Bosque); apparently introduced into adjacent Colorado River drainage; medium to large prairie streams with sandy substrate and turbid to clear warm water; presumably eats small aquatic invertebrates

MAMMALS		Federal Status	State Status
Gray wolf	*Canis lupus*	LE	E

extirpated; formerly known throughout the western two-thirds of the state in forests, brushlands, or grasslands

Plains spotted skunk *Spilogale putorius interrupta*

catholic; open fields, prairies, croplands, fence rows, farmyards, forest edges, and woodlands; prefers wooded, brushy areas and tallgrass prairie

Red wolf	*Canis rufus*	LE	E

extirpated; formerly known throughout eastern half of Texas in brushy and forested areas, as well as coastal prairies

PALO PINTO COUNTY

MOLLUSKS

		Federal Status	State Status
Texas fawnsfoot	*Truncilla macrodon*	C	T

little known; possibly rivers and larger streams, and intolerant of impoundment; flowing rice irrigation canals, possibly sand, gravel, and perhaps sandy-mud bottoms in moderate flows; Brazos and Colorado River basins

REPTILES

		Federal Status	State Status
Brazos water snake	*Nerodia harteri*		T

upper Brazos River drainage; riffle specialist, in shallow water with rocky bottom and on rocky portions of banks

Texas horned lizard	*Phrynosoma cornutum*		T

open, arid and semi-arid regions with sparse vegetation, including grass, cactus, scattered brush or scrubby trees; soil may vary in texture from sandy to rocky; burrows into soil, enters rodent burrows, or hides under rock when inactive; breeds March-September

PLANTS

		Federal Status	State Status
Glass Mountains coral-root	*Hexalectris nitida*		

GLOBAL RANK: G3; Apparently rare in mixed woodlands in canyons in the mountains of the Brewster County, but encountered with regularity, albeit in small numbers, under Juniperus ashei in woodlands over limestone on the Edwards Plateau, Callahan Divide and Lampasas Cutplain; Perennial; Flowering June-Sept; Fruiting July-Sept

Osage Plains false foxglove *Agalinis densiflora*

GLOBAL RANK: G3; Most records are from grasslands on shallow, gravelly, well drained, calcareous soils; Prairies, dry limestone soils; Annual; Flowering Aug-Oct

Tree dodder *Cuscuta exaltata*

GLOBAL RANK: G3; Parasitic on various Quercus, Juglans, Rhus, Vitis, Ulmus, and Diospyros species as well as Acacia berlandieri and other woody plants; Annual; Flowering May-Oct; Fruiting July-Oct

Appendix I: Texas Register Notice

Texas Register

AGENCY Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
ISSUE 03/20/2015
ACTION Miscellaneous

Notice of Proposed Real Estate Transaction

Acquisition of Land - Palo Pinto County

Approximately 5,500 Acres for a New Wildlife Management Area

In a meeting on March 26, 2015, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission (the Commission) will consider the acquisition of approximately 5,500 acres in **Palo Pinto** County for establishment of a new Wildlife Management Area representing the Cross Timbers ecoregion. At this meeting, the public will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed transaction before the Commission takes action. The meeting will start at 9:00 a.m. at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Headquarters, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744. Prior to the meeting, public comment may be submitted to Corky Kuhlmann, Land Conservation, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744 or by email at *corky.kuhlmann@tpwd.texas.gov* or through the TPWD web site at *tpwd.texas.gov*.

TRD-201500761

Ann Bright

General Counsel

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Filed: March 5, 2015

Appendix J: Commission Meeting Agenda

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission

Schedule for March 25-26, 2015

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Commission Hearing Room
4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744

Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.

Archived Audio

- Work Session — MP3 Audio File (MP3 25.9 MB)

9:00 a.m. — Work Session

- Work Session, Commission Hearing Room
- Executive Session, Executive Office Conference Room

Thursday, March 26, 2015

Archived Audio

- Commission — MP3 Audio File (MP3 16.7 MB)

9:00 am — Commission Meeting

Commission Meeting

Thursday, March 26, 2015
9:00 a.m.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Commission Hearing Room
4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744

Commissioner Dan Allen Hughes, Jr., Commission Chair
Carter Smith, Executive Director

Approval of Previous Commission Meeting Minutes held January 22, 2015

- Acknowledgement of Donations
- Consideration of Contracts
- Special Recognitions
  - National Wild Turkey Federation's (NWTF) National Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award – Chris Swift
  - National Wild Turkey Federation's (NWTF) - Joe Kurz Excellence in Wildlife Management Award – Dana Wright
  - Texas Master Naturalist Volunteers – Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Environmental Excellence Award, Civic/Community – Michelle Haggerty
  - American Fisheries Society-Fisheries Administration Section- 2014 Sport Fish Restoration Outstanding Project Award – Dan Bennett, John Tibbs, John Botros, and Dakus Geeslin
- Retirement and Service Award Presentations

1. ACTION – Approval of Agenda

2. **ACTION - 2015-2016 Statewide Hunting Proclamation – Recommended Adoption of Proposed Changes** – Jason Hardin, Kevin Davis
3. **ACTION - 2015-2016 Statewide Recreational and Commercial Fishing Proclamation – Recommended Adoption of Proposed Changes** – Ken Kurzawski
4. **ACTION - Commercial Shrimping Regulations - Recommended Adoption of Proposed Changes** - Mark Lingo
5. **ACTION - Rules Governing Buoy Standards – Recommended Adoption of Proposed Changes** - Cody Jones
6. **ACTION - Land Acquisition Matagorda County – Approximately 267 Acres on Matagorda Peninsula** - Ted Hollingsworth
7. **ACTION - Acceptance of Land Donation - Matagorda County – Approximately 22 Acres on Matagorda Peninsula** - Ted Hollingsworth
8. **ACTION - Land Acquisition Nacogdoches County – Approximately 133 Acres adjacent to Alazan Bayou Wildlife Management Area** - Corky Kuhlmann
9. **ACTION - Land Acquisition Brazoria County - Easement for Pump Station and Pipeline – Approximately 1.7 Acres at Sea Center Texas** – Corky Kuhlmann
10. **ACTION - Land Acquisition Palo Pinto County – Approximately 5500 acres of land in the Cross Timbers Region to create a new Wildlife Management Area** – Corky Kuhlmann
11. **BRIEFING - Real World Career Experiences – Partnership Opportunity with Boy Scouts of America Explorer Program** – Kevin Malonson